



Dear friend:

The past few years and months have taught us that while we live in a wonderful state and nation, we are not immune to disaster, whether man-made or acts of nature.

The lessons we have learned from the people of the Gulf Coast, even as they continue rebuilding their lives, is that while we may not be able to prevent a disaster, a few simple steps will protect our families. What is most important is that these steps be taken now, because preparing for a disaster when one is imminent is already too late.

While disaster preparation may seem long and involved, securing peace of mind that comes with being prepared is, in reality, the result of a few simple tasks.

This brochure provides details on what you can do to prepare yourself, as well as the phone numbers of several relief agencies to which you can donate to help people affected by natural disasters.

As we pray for the people of the Gulf Coast and elsewhere, please know that my colleagues in State Government and I also remain vigilant to ensure that as we continue rebuilding New York City from our own tragedy, we do so in the most effective and safest way possible.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

KEVIN PARKER
21st Senate District



In 2001, New York State passed Chapter 358, a law authorizing paid leave for State and local government employees to volunteer for Red Cross disaster relief assignments. The following year, Chapter 505 extended that law to include school district employees. Presently, the Red Cross is working with all government entities to develop procedures that would expedite the leave for their employees.

In your community, you and your neighbors can take numerous steps to ensure preparedness. Meet with them to plan how you can work together after a disaster until help arrives. If you're the member of a neighborhood organization, include disaster preparedness as a new activity. Know which neighbors have special skills (medical, technical), and consider ones that have special needs, including those who are elderly and disabled. Neighbors should also plan for child care in case some parents can't get home.

Protecting Your Family

With many families having two working parents and children who might be at school, with their peers or elsewhere, it is unrealistic to expect your entire family to be at home at the time of an emergency. Planning in advance will save you a great deal of worry later.

Families should establish a meeting place in the event of a disaster. In case of a fire, it's best to meet outside the home. If a family member can't return home, establish a meeting place outside the neighborhood. In addition, asking an out-of-state friend to be a contact is a wise plan. After a disaster, it is often easier to call long-distance.

Families should also keep enough supplies in their homes for at least three days. Provisions should include a three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food that won't spoil; one change of clothing and footwear per person; a first aid kit containing your family's prescription medications; emergency tools including a battery-powered radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries; an extra set of car keys, a credit card, cash or traveler's checks; sanitation supplies; special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members and an extra pair of glasses.

Be sure to rotate your food supplies every six months and change your water supply every three months. Keep important family documents in a waterproof container, and prepare a smaller kit for the trunk of your car.

Helpful Hints in the Event of a Disaster

**Our first instincts are often helpful to us.
In the event of a disaster, they may be harmful.
Think about what you would do in these instances:**

- 1.** You hear an explosion. Should you immediately cover your nose and mouth with a cotton shirt or dust mask?

Yes. Covering your nose and mouth will reduce the possibility of inhaling toxic particles or radioactive dust.

- 2.** If authorities warn that an explosion has released radiation, where is the safest place to be?

In a basement. Being sheltered by thick walls below ground offers the best protection.

- 3.** You are trapped beneath a building after a tornado or another disaster. You hear rescuers in the area. Should you shout to alert them?

Only as a last resort. You may inhale dust or other harmful substances. You should first use a flashlight if one is available, or tap on a pipe or wall.

- 4.** You are not completely sure if your local water supply is safe. Can you find or create safe water by boiling it, adding bleach, or using water from a hot water heater if it isn't damaged, or from a radiator?

Never drink water from a radiator. Hot water heater water is safe. Boiling water for three to five minutes is the safest method. If you are unable to do that, adding 1/8 of a tablespoon of bleach per gallon of water is acceptable, but will not kill parasites.

Safety in the Workplace



It may be a fire, a blackout, or a storm. Or a co-worker may fall seriously ill. If you work eight hours a day, you spend 40 hours a week at work, which means there is ample opportunity for any such instance to occur. Preparing for emergencies can save a co-worker's life. The American Red Cross offers courses in first aid, CPR, use of automated external defibrillation machines and injury control. For more information, contact your local Red Cross chapter, visit www.redcross.org or call 1-800-667-2968.

Informing Authorities

If you see a disaster and are near a phone, call **9-1-1**. Never think that authorities have already been alerted.

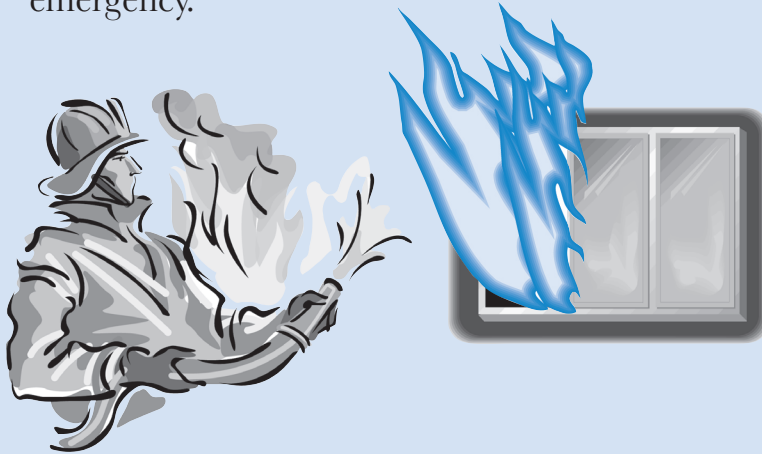
Be sure to provide the following information:

- **Your name, and the phone number from where you are calling**
- **What happened**
- **Your exact location, including nearby intersections, landmarks, the building name and/or apartment number**
- **How many people are injured and their conditions; and**
- **What help if any is already being administered.**

Do not hang up on the dispatcher until you are told to do so. If the dispatcher says authorities have already been alerted, hang up immediately to allow other emergency calls to get through.

Creating a Home Fire Escape Plan

If there is a fire in your home or apartment, there are three things to remember above all else: stay calm, use common sense and *never* return to a burning building after you have escaped. Again, planning in advance will be helpful in case of an emergency.



HERE ARE SOME TIPS:

1. Draw an outline of your home on a sheet of paper. Draw a separate outline for each floor.
2. Identify and draw two escape routes from each room where any family member spends time, especially sleeping rooms.
3. Identify a meeting place outside the home.
4. Designate who should call the fire department and from what location. Be sure to leave your home or building first and then call from a nearby phone.
5. Practice your plan.

Consider the following when developing your escape plan:

- Do the windows in each room open easily, and can children open them?
- Where are the fire extinguishers located? They should be near the fireplace and in the kitchen, garage and basement. Every family member should know how to use them.
- Is a smoke alarm located on each floor? Are they checked at least once a month? Are the batteries changed once a year?
- Do you have a carbon monoxide detector? There should be one on each floor, near sleeping areas but not in the kitchen or garage.
- In apartments, do not depend on elevators. Know where the stairs are located.
- If there is smoke in your room, get close to the ground. The breathable air will be near the floor.
- During a fire, be sure each family member knows to touch a door before opening it. If the door is hot, do not open it. Instead, stuff wet clothes against the cracks around the door and the vents. Call for help and tell the dispatcher where you are in the building.

Disaster-Related Relief Organizations

The American Red Cross

1-800-HELP NOW • www.redcross.org

AmeriCares

1-800-486-4357 • www.americares.org

American's Second Harvest

1-800-817-2307 • www.secondharvest.org

ASPCA

1-866-275-3923 • www.asPCA.org

B'nai B'rith International

1-888-388-4224 • www.bnaiBrith.org

Habitat for Humanity

1-866-720-2800 • www.habitat.org

International Orthodox Christian Charities

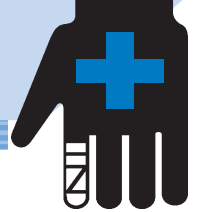
1-877-803-4662

Salvation Army

1-800-SALARMY • www.salvationarmyusa.org

Disaster Preparedness

Senator
KEVIN
PARKER



New York State Senate, Albany, New York 12247

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Food and Water in an Emergency

If an earthquake, hurricane, winter storm or other disaster strikes your community, you might not have access to food, water and electricity for days, or even weeks. By taking some time now to store emergency food and water supplies, you can provide for your entire family. Having an ample supply of clean water is a top priority in an emergency. A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water each day. Children, nursing mothers and ill people will need even more. You will also need water for food preparation and hygiene. Store a total of at least one gallon per person, per day. You should store at least a two-week supply of water for each member of your family.

If supplies run low, never ration water. Drink the amount you need today, and try to find more for tomorrow. You can minimize the amount of water your body needs by reducing activity and staying cool.

Emergency Outdoor Water Sources

If you need to find water outside your home, you can use these sources. Be sure to treat outdoor water with the same precautions as previously listed.

*Rainwater *Streams, rivers and other moving bodies of water *Ponds and lakes *Natural springs

Avoid water with floating material, an odor or dark color. Use saltwater only if you distill it first. You should not drink flood water.

Food Supplies

When Food Supplies Are Low

If activity is reduced, healthy people can survive on half their usual food intake for an extended period and without

any food for many days. Food, unlike water, may be rationed safely, except for children and pregnant women.

If your water supply is limited, try to avoid foods that are high in fat and protein, and don't stock salty foods, since they will make you thirsty. Try to eat salt-free crackers, whole grain cereals and canned foods with high liquid content.

You don't need to go out and buy unfamiliar foods to prepare an emergency food supply. You can use the canned foods, dry mixes and other staples on your cupboard shelves.

Disaster Supplies

You need to have these items packed and ready in one place before disaster strikes.

Pack at least a three-day supply of food and water, and store it in a handy place. Choose foods that are easy to carry, nutritious and ready-to-eat. In addition, pack these emergency items:

- Medical supplies and first aid manual
- Hygiene supplies
- Portable radio, flashlights and extra batteries
- Shovel and other useful tools
- Household liquid bleach to treat drinking water
- Money and matches in a waterproof container
- Fire extinguisher
- Blanket and extra clothing
- Infant and small children's needs (if appropriate)
- Manual can opener

This excerpt is reprinted courtesy the American Red Cross. For the complete article visit nyredcross.org.